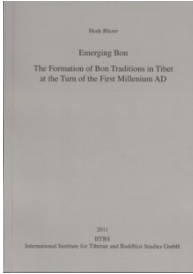


## REVIEW: *EMERGING BON*

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Blezer, Henk (ed). 2011. *Emerging Bon – The Formation of Bon Traditions in Tibet at the Turn of the First Millennium AD*. PIATS 2006: Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Eleventh Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Königswinter. (Beiträge zur Zentralasienforschung, 26) Andiast: International Institute for Tibetan and Buddhist Studies. 368pp, Introduction (Henk Blezer), 23 illustrations, 3 charts, 5 tables. ISBN: 978-3-03809-113-4 (paperback 98.50€).

The origins of Bon བོན་,<sup>1</sup> the putative pre-Buddhist religion of Tibet or Zhangzhung རང་ལྗང་, remain shrouded in mystery. To Western

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<sup>1</sup> [Editorial note – AHP prefers authors to use the Wylie system. We have published this review using a unique transliteration system at the author's insistence.] The Tibetan syllable-final *tsheg* ཚེག་ is a device to help identify the syllable core or the inherent vowel *a*, and does not primarily serve to separate isolated monosyllables. This is evident from handwriting where the syllabic representation is given up in certain cases, such as *bdagi* བདག་ཀི་ instead of *bdaggi* བདག་གི་ 'my'. Cf. also the case of *ngangur* རང་རུར་, cited below. p. 10, where the first graphic syllable does not have a meaning of its own and the morpheme boundary actually lies on (or within) the initial consonant of the second graphic syllable. Since the inherent vowel *a* is conventionally 'transliterated', there is no need for a syllabic rendering (except in paleographic studies). Being a linguist as much as a 'lover of words' (philologist), I think that Tibetan should not be represented in an unstructured flow of syllables, and I shall thus transliterate (inflected) 'words', that is, intonational units. While each Tibetan letter should be represented by a single sign, I avoid diacritics in my own text, because the quotations have to follow the Wylie convention. An exception is made for the inversed vowel sign ཨི་ (*i*), to avoid typographical oddities, and for the letter འ་

observers it has become evident that the origins of the present systematic or 'Eternal' Bon can only be sought in the *phyidar* ཕྱིན་ 'the later spread (of Buddhism)', the revaluation period of the late tenth to twelfth centuries, when both rulers and religious leaders attempted to re-establish Tibet's imperial power. To this end, they did their utmost to reinvent a shadowy, prehistoric past along with the reinvention of Imperial history. Tibetan scholars, particularly those of Bonpo བོན་པོ་ persuasion, contend that Bon was the original Tibetan religion, long before Buddhism was introduced and eventually established as the state religion. Not content with claimed anteriority in Tibet, the Bonpo tradition shifts the origins further and further into a mythological past, certainly not without some inspiration from the large numbers used in the Indian Buddhist historical tradition as received by the Tibetans.<sup>2</sup> While there must have been one or more non-Buddhist belief sets in Tibet, the lack of historical evidence for pre-imperial Tibet makes their reconstruction and the establishment of their relationship to the present Bon religion impossible. The main focus of this volume is thus on the revaluation period.

The first three contributions, however, deal with the prehistory of Western Tibet and the possibility of relating archaeological findings with textual traditions. Both Aldenderfer and Li report on systematic excavations, while Bellezza reports on surface surveys. Subsequently, two contributions by Blezer and one by Beckwith radically reject the traditional accounts of Bon prehistory, or at least try to put them into perspective, while McKay attempts to pin down the historicity of Zhangzhung from Indian sources. The remaining contributions – two by Kalsang Norbu Gurung, and the last by Nyima

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(h), as the commonly used elision sign is unsuitable for representing a consonant. I shall add Tibetan script on the first occurrence of each word or phrase.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the first section of the *Debgtér sngonpo* དེབ་གཏེར་སྔོན་པོ་, which lists over a million generations of rulers before reaching Gautama, the ancestor of the Śakyas in twenty-four sub-lineages associated with different places. Most of these sub-lineages count between 5,000 and 85,000 generations.

Woser Choekhortshang – use a more conservative approach within the Tibetan historical tradition, dealing with the re-establishment of Bonpo and Buddhist monastic discipline and the identification of the *Hbyungkhungsmdo* རྟུང་ཁུངས་མཛོད་, the first *sūtra* of the oldest Bonpo *sūtra* collection. The last pages (pp. 321-368) contain a general bibliography. The book lacks an index.

The combination of quite different perspectives and methodologies should stimulate further discussion. However, the interdisciplinary approach would have been more effective if the editor had brought the contributors into discussion. The lack of communication, or at least cross-referencing, is regrettable, particularly in the first two and last two contributions.

One also expects more dedication in the general editing process. The space of more than three centimeters between headline and text is quite odd, but may still pass for bad taste. Pages 225 and 226, however, constitute a severe typographical offence: both pages, originally in landscape format, instead of having been rotated, have been reduced to half size with the miniature headlines positioned almost in the center of the page. Even more disturbingly, the editor (or publisher?) was unable to restart footnote numbering in each contribution. The cross references, however, do not follow this 'principle', so that we have to add 162 to Beckwith's cross references and 207 to McKay's.

Aldenderfer (13-34: The Material Correlates of Religious Practice in Far Western Tibet: 500 BCE – 500 CE) and Li (35-52: Archaeological Survey of 'Khung lung Silver Castle' in Western Tibet), both describe excavations at Mkhargdongri མཁར་གདོང་རི་ or Khyunglung ཁུང་ལུང་ mesa near Gurgyam གུར་གྲམ་, at what they believe to be the location of the so-called 'Khyunglung Silver Castle' ཁུང་ལུང་དངུལ་མཁར་. Unfortunately, the satellite images do not match and the reader must struggle to conclude that one of the sites, referred to as 'Structure 66' by Aldenderfer, is identical to the site termed 'o4KLAS66' and 'S-66' by Li. From the base of this site, which may have been a religious building, an interesting bronze figure was excavated.

This figure sits in a crouching posture. The head, featuring a broad face and wearing a head ornament, part of which hangs down in a flat strip over a comparatively flat nose, constitutes almost half of the figure's height. No measurements are given, although this figure is quite peculiar and the only finding to-date that might be linked to religious practise, apart from the architectural remains. In note 3 on p. 20, Aldenderfer refers to Blezer's observation of "similarities" with "earlier artistic traditions of the Indus basin". However, without referring to any particular object, this is a disappointing speculation. There is assuredly no similarity with the terracotta or bronze figurines of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, nor with the stone sculpture of the so-called 'priest-king'.

As Li shows, the Mkhargdong site is a settlement with ordinary residences, a fortress, a sacred space, and large burial mounds. Even if not the location of the Silver Castle (see Blezer below), it is an important prehistoric site, dating from 3,000 to 2,000 years before the present. According to Aldenderfer, it must have been still occupied during the early Tibetan Empire.

In the longest contribution, (53-116: Territorial Characteristics of the pre-Buddhist Zhang zhung Paleocultural Entity – a Comparative Analysis of Archaeological Evidence and Popular Bon Literary Sources), Bellezza attempts to "document the territorial extent of the pre-Buddhist paleocultural zone, traditionally known as Zhang zhung" (53) and to identify archaeological sites with place names given in two comparatively recent Bonpo texts, the nineteenth century *Tiseḥi dkarchag* ཁི་ཤེ་འི་དཀར་ཆག་ by Dkarrru Grubdbang Bstanḥdzin དཀར་རུ་གྲུབ་དབང་བསྟན་འཛིན་ and the twentieth century *Bstanḥbyung* བསྟན་འབྱུང་ by Lopon Tenzin Namdak ལྷོ་བ་དཔོན་བསྟན་འཛིན་ཅུ་མ་དག་.

In a second step, all monuments to be found in a radius of fifty kilometers of these sites are surveyed, demonstrating that "the centres of pre-Buddhist settlement, rather than existing in isolation are found in association with a variety of other monuments" (55). Finally, the distribution of two types of stone pillar is used to define the boundaries of this Upper Tibetan culture, which largely matches the boundaries given for Zhangzhung in the Tibetan Bonpo literature (ibid).

However, the label 'pre-Buddhist', which is treated as synonymous with Zhangzhung, is also used for allegedly non-Buddhist cultural phenomena that persisted after the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet. What may be a useful heuristic approach is quite problematic, due to its inbuilt circularity. It is also problematic to make assumptions about the extent of Zhangzhung on the basis of recent texts, when it is not even evident, which of the presently used names were applied to which regions in the distant past – if the names can be considered old at all. The place names of the Bonpo texts are at best drawn from Imperial sources and cannot definitively reflect any reality before the seventh century. At times, they only reflect post-Imperial idealisations of the Tibetan Empire. Extreme care must be used with identifications that seem obvious. For example, Lupon Tenzin Namdak refers to a castle in "Rbalte" རལ་ཏེ (p. 60, n. 50). This spelling is a variant of the more common form *Sbalte* སླལ་ཏེ for what is now (a part of) Baltistan, but no place name *Sbal* སླལ་, *Rbal* རལ་, *Hbal* རལ་ or *Bal* རལ་ followed by *te* ཏེ or *ti* ཏི, appears in Old Tibetan sources, at least not in those that are currently available online.

Throughout recorded history, political entities reorganized, names were transferred from one place to another, and claims about political affiliations reformulated – all for various motives. There is no reason to assume that power shifts and/ or migrations of different ethnic tribes did not occur in prehistory. It is certainly not true that "contrasts in the archaeological record between the east and the west [of Upper Tibet] are due to ... relatively minor ethnological variations, not a major ethnical or linguistic watershed" (63), particularly as the Tibetan tradition itself associates the region east of the archaeological demarcation line with a different ethnic group – the Sumpas (64).

Nevertheless, Bellezza's survey is an important contribution to academic understandings of pre-historic Tibet, even if the relation between Zhangzhung and the Bon religion or some of the identifications of Bonpo place names need future revision. The maps, provided on pages 115 and 116 – unfortunately far too small to be easily readable – show a clustering of archaeological sites in three major regions: somewhat south of the east end of Panggong Lake

ཕང་གོང་མཚོ་, around and north of Lake Mapang མཚོ་མ་ཕང་, and around Lake Dangra G.yumtsho དང་ར་གཡུ་མཚོ་, particularly along its eastern shore. Stone pillars are found east of the upper course of the Indus, between and along the lakes, and along the upper course of the Brahmaputra.

In his first contribution (117-163: *In Search of the Heartland of Bon – Khyung lung Dngul mkhar the Silver Castle in Garuḍa Valley*), Blezer reconstructs the development of *Bon* origin narratives. According to him, the Bonpo would have shifted badly memorised facts and fiction from an original location in Rkongpo རྟོག་པོ་ to a more prestigious west. One part of the argument is that the reading *Rngulmkhar* རྟུ་མཁར་ 'Silver Castle' is a later creation, based on a misunderstanding of an original *Rdulmkhar* རྟུ་མཁར་ 'sand(y) castle'. A 'sand(y) castle' might be found in many places, whereas a 'silver castle' would be related only to certain geological formations, such as whitish rocks.

*The Old Tibetan Chronicle* (Pt 1287, line 408), is one of the first literary sources for the castle (only Pt 1060 might be earlier). Blezer, in keeping with Beckwith's repeated claims to this effect (e.g., Walter & Beckwith 2010 and below), avers that most Old Tibetan documents, and particularly the *Chronicle* might not have originated during the Tibetan Empire. However, 'post-Imperial' could be anything from 842 (the end of the Empire), to the beginning of the eleventh century, or even later – if one assumes that the Dunhuang cave had been opened after the first sealing (commonly dated to 1036). However, no document has been found with a date later than 1002 (see van Schaik and Galambos 2012:26).

For the attentive reader, the *Chronicle* is obviously a draft version, written and manipulated for a certain political purpose, which may have been motivated by the power struggles at the end of the Empire. Even without such political agenda, it is difficult to imagine who would have had an interest of compiling this document outside Tibet, in Dunhuang, several decades after the Empire's collapse. It is thus reasonable to date the *Chronicle* to the mid-ninth century or to the early second half of the ninth century at the latest. The same holds for the various 'catalogues of ancient principalities' (Pt 1060, 1286, and 1290).

While the *Chronicle* does not explicitly locate the Silver Castle, it states that Princess Sadmarkar སད་མར་ཀར་ had left for Lake Mapang. Blezer contends that the castle could not have been at Mkhargdong, about four days' journey from Mt. Tise ཧི་སེ, but must have been located "much further east", closer to Lake Mapang (135). There is actually no reason why the princess, who was unwelcome at her spouse's court, would not have stayed at some greater distance. However, this is only a minor issue.

The Silver Castle is also mentioned in one of the 'catalogues of ancient principalities' – actually only in Pt 1060 and not in Pt 1290 as Blezer claims – where it is associated with the 'high watershed of the rivers of the country' *yulchabgyi yabgo* ཡུལ་ཆབ་གྱི་ཡ་བགོ་.<sup>3</sup>

Blezer translates this expression as "the upper divide of the region's river", identifying it with the upper reaches of the Rtsangpo རྩང་པོ་ (143). To support this interpretation, Blezer adduces Pt 1136, a funeral text concerning a Rtsang རྩང་ princess, who committed suicide because she did not want to marry the Lord of Guge ལུ་གེ་. Her father is the Rtsang Lord, Hode Hosbdag ཧོད་ཧོས་བདག་, residing at or in *yulchabkyi yabgo* ཡུལ་ཆབ་གྱི་ཡ་བགོ་. However, 'divide' is an odd designation for an area of confluence, and is certainly more appropriate for an important watershed, such as the Kailash, between the Brahmaputra, the Indus, the Satlej, and, as the tradition has it, the Ganga (if the Kali Gandaki is taken as the source river).

Pt 1060 l. 63f., on the other hand, associates the *yulchabgyi yabgo* with the Silver Castle of Khyunglung and the Zhangzhung ruler Lig Snyashur ལིག་སྙམ་ཤུར་ (Zhangzhung is mentioned explicitly in l. 70), while the Lord of Rtsang is mentioned separately several lines further down.<sup>4</sup> In two of the catalogues, Lig Snyashur<sup>5</sup> is described as Lord of Zhangzhung Darpa རལ་པ་ (Pt 1286, l. 7) or Darma དར་མ་

<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps: 'the region: The Rivers' High Watershed', cf. Uray's (1972b:41) analysis in his transliteration.

<sup>4</sup> The latter is introduced at l. 74 as the Lord Phyva in the castle at the river [of] Upper Rtsang, where the country opens up: *yulkhala Rtsangstod rtsanggyi dngo mkhargyi nangnah / ... rje Rtsangrjeñi Phyvah // ཡུལ་ཁ་ལ་རྩང་སྤྱོད་རྩང་གྱི་དངོ་མཁར་གྱི་ནང་ནས་... རྩེ་རྩང་རྩེ་འཕྲུ།*

<sup>5</sup> Pt 1290; spelling variants in Pt 1290: Leg/ Lag Snyashur ལིག་ལ་སྙམ་ཤུར་.

(Pt 1290, l. 5); and again, the Lord of Rtsang is mentioned separately. The region of Darpa/ Darma can be localised in the Upper Satlej Valley (cf. Dagkar Namgyal Nyima 2003). It is also given with the spelling *Hdarba* ར་པ་ in the nineteenth century geography of Blama Btsanpo བླ་མ་བཙུན་པོ་ (Wylie 1962:8/61) as lying between Ladakh and Guge. The designation *yulchabgyi yabgo* thus included both sides of the watershed.

Blezer finally refers to the early *phyidar* texts *Kunḥbum goḥbyed* ཀུན་འབྲུམ་གོ་འབྱེད་ and *Mdohḍus* མདོ་འདུས་, where Stonpa Gshenrab ལྷོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་ is presented as the founder of the Silver Castle. While the first text locates the castle at Lake Mapang (p. 139f.), the second text is less clear: Gshenrab receives a bride from the Rkongpo ruler, a 'highway' (*shullam* ལུལ་ལམ་)<sup>6</sup> takes him (*phyung* ཕུང་) to the *yar[cha]b Rtsangpo* ཡར་[ཆ]པ་རྩང་པོ་, and after staying at Lhari Gyangdo ལྷ་རི་གླང་དོ་, he builds the Silver Castle at Shuldkar Rtsangbya G.yungdrungkha ལུལ་དཀར་རྩང་བྱ་གཡུང་རྩུང་ཁ་ (pp. 130-132). If the text had given an accurate account of an ordinary man's journey, the latter place could be expected to be near Rkongpo – albeit only if the common identification of Lhari Gyangdo with Rkongpo Bonri རྩང་པོ་བོན་རི་ (cf. p. 131 with n. 129) holds. But how is Rkongpo Bonri reached by travelling from Rkongpo along the upper (!*yarchab*) Rtsangpo – even if by this designation, as Blezer seems to suggest, the Yarkluns River ཡར་ལུང་ས་རྩང་པོ་ is indicated? The name element *Rtsangbya* certainly points to Rtsang. And while hagiographies are usually vague on geographical details, nothing would have prevented a man Stonpa Gshenrab's stature from covering the 1,000 kilometers magically in very short order.

Blezer eventually concludes that the *yulchabgyi yabgo* and hence the Silver Castle could be "anywhere in Greater Rtsang (Rtsang chen) between dBus (near Rkong po: *Mdo 'dus*) and Ma pang & Ti se" (146). All this would indicate that memories:

<sup>6</sup> Alternatively, this word may perhaps be interpreted as the 'Shul-road', that is, the road leading to Shuldkar Rtsangbya G.yungdrungkha.



of a heartland of Bon or an important castle near Rkong po recombined with the growing importance of the Zhang zhung Ti se 'central mountain and rivers'-type of geography, and thus a sandy castle may have ended up near lake Ma pang & Mount Ti se, both perceived at the heart of Zhang zhung (150).

While Blezer assumes that the developing narrative shifted the Silver Castle slowly from east to west, his textual evidence shows the opposite movement: the *Mdohdus* must be later than the *Chronicle* and the various catalogues of principalities (otherwise, one would have to conclude that a form of Eternal Bon already existed during the Empire). The conspicuous anachronism, that is, the illogical insertion of Lhari Gyangdo/ Rkongpo Bonri into the narrative, not only testifies to a late compilation of the text, but also to an attempt of certain Bonpo to appropriate historical or mythological elements from the West, which parallels the appropriation of Western elements in the Imperial historical narratives.

It also testifies to a certain political interest in positioning Rkongpo as the original centre of Bon, but this does not prove that this was the sole region where such claims were formulated, and even less that it was the (sole) region where the *phyidar* Bon religion crystallised. Other possible East Tibetan candidates for a *phyidar* Bon heartland could be found: the northern lake district with the "Shang-shung-la" (ཤང་ཤུང་ལ་) at the river head of the Nagchu ནག་ཆུ་ (Kun Chang 1960, as cited by Uray [1972b:44, n. 95]), perhaps also Tsongkha རྩོག་ཁ་ in the north-east, as suggested by Beckwith (below).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The question of where the heartland of Bon is to be found is not necessarily related to the question which regions are to be identified with Zhangzhung. Nevertheless, any such identification may depend on local Bonpo traditions and on claims concerning the original religious centre. I am informed that some Chinese scholars associate Zhangzhung with Rgyalrong རྒྱལ་རྩོད་ in Sichuan (Timothy Thurston, pers. comm.). This must be on the base of an identification of Zhangzhung with the (eastern) Women's Dominion (Nüguo). The latter is easily confounded with its western counterpart (possibly the Dardic areas around Gilgit, including perhaps also Uḍḍiyāna in the South and/or Hunza-Nagar in the North). There has been a certain

The whole argument rests on the professed late date of the *Chronicle* and on the reading of *Rdulmkhar*. The latter is more than problematic, as the meaning of *rdul* རདུལ་ is not 'sand', but 'dust', moreover "not so much as a deposited mass, but rather as particles floating in the air, motes, atoms", as Jäschke (1881) notes. Blezer does not give any reason why Jäschke should have been wrong. It is a fundamental necessity, unfortunately often ignored in translations from Tibetan texts, to verify the exact meaning of any given word or construction. Mere guessing or the wilful extension of meaning is not particularly helpful, when trying to readjust a tradition.

There is no doubt that the letters *da* ད་ and *nga* ལ་ tend to become indistinguishable in poor handwriting. Bacot et al. (1940:116) read *rdul*, and the editors of the online version<sup>8</sup> followed this uncritically, although Uray (1972a: 8) rejected this spelling long ago, together with the translation 'chateau poudreux'. The Tibetan edition by Wang and Bsodnams Skyid (1992:58) has *rngul* རྩལ་ 'silver'. Blezer would have been wise to check the epigraphic evidence.

As one can see in Figure 1, the vowel graph *u* is typically a bit out of line, when combined with the letter *da*, that is, the end of the letter *da* and the onset of the vowel graph, form an angle. When combined with the letter *nga*, the vowel graph *u* tends to flow organically out of the right end of the lower line of the letter *nga*. Since the bottom line of the letter *nga* is thus lengthened, it often resembles the letter *da*. Not infrequently, the vowel graph is also slightly out of line, but the graph starts higher up than in the combination *du*. Both variants of the compound graph *ngu* can be found side by side, even in the same line, in the *Chronicle*. In l. 227, we are dealing with the same word, a compound of *ngang* རྩ་ག་ 'goose' and

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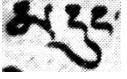
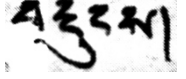

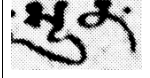
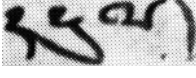

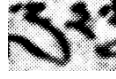


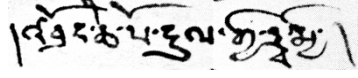

overlap between (Lesser or western) Yangtong, the (western) Women's Dominion, and the country of the 'Goldrace' (Suvarṇagotra), all of which touch upon, or comprise parts of the Indus Valley and the western Cangthang རྩ་ག་ and hence areas that might have been part of Zhangzhung. See Zeisler (2010) for a detailed discussion of the problem.

<sup>8</sup> Old Tibetan Documents Online:

[http://otdo.aa.tufts.ac.jp/archives.cgi?p=Pt\\_1287](http://otdo.aa.tufts.ac.jp/archives.cgi?p=Pt_1287), accessed 19 February 2013. For the print version, see Imaeda et al. (2007:218).

*ngur* རྩ 'duck' (cf. also l. 226), reduced to *ngangur* རྩརྩ. In the first instance, the vowel is out-of-line, in the second, it flows out organically from the consonant, which thus almost looks like *da*. The case of *Rngulmkhar* is similar, cf. also the rendering of *rngul* in l. 215 in contrast to that in l. 436. The reading *rdul* is thus unwarranted.

Figure 1: Combinations of *du* and *ngu* in the *Chronicle*.

 l. 7: <i>du</i>	 l. 8: <i>du drung</i>	 l. 11: <i>mdung</i>	 l. 58: <i>brdungs</i>
 l. 119: <i>sdur</i>	 l. 150: <i>sngun</i>	 l. 417: <i>dngul</i>	 l. 436: <i>rngul</i>
 l. 226: <i>ngur</i>	 l. 227: <i>ngangur</i>	 l. 227: <i>ngangur</i>	
 l. 215: <i>hbrong chepo rngulgyi rva myi</i>			
 l. 408: <i>Khyunglung ni Rngulmkhar</i>			

While Blezer's contribution still provides valuable insight into how the founder narratives were construed, Beckwith's contribution (164-184: *On Zhangzhung and Bon*) is a marvellous construction of its own, which would have us believe that the words *Bon* and *Bonpo* were late inventions. Old Tibetan texts in which these words appear, such as Pt 1042 (a funeral text) would be "paleographically and linguistically late ... long after the Tibetan Empire period ... thus undoubtedly more or less contemporaneous with the 'transmitted' early Bon texts" (172). This claim is not further substantiated.

*Bon* as a religion would have come into being in the "intermediate propagation [of the faith] period" as an offshoot of a Western Central Asian Buddhist tradition. In contrast to the more

orthodox Rnyingma རྟེན་མ་ Buddhists, the Bonpo practitioners would have lost the scriptural tradition, and would have incorporated syncretic material into their oral tradition (175).

The name *Bon* would have been derived from the Chinese designation for Tibet 蕃 *fán*, pronounced *\*buan* in Middle Chinese. Because in the north-eastern areas, such as Tsongkha, a Tibetan vowel *o* is presently (!) realised as *wa*, ninth century inhabitants of that area would have interpreted *\*buan* as *bwan* and as an equivalent for a not yet existing Tibetan word *\*bon* (178-182). This Chinese designation for Tibet *buan/ bwan/ bon* would have first been:

applied by the Buddhists of the area to distinguish those Tibetan practitioners who followed a variant tradition unlike the 'mainstream' tradition followed by the Chinese, Sogdians, Uighurs, and the other Tibetans. ... When the school expanded outside the region ... it became known throughout the Tibetan-speaking world as Bon, and the Tibetan adjective form Bonpo was coined for its followers (182).

This implies that the Tsongkha Buddhists in question either did not recognise the meaning of the Chinese word or did not think of themselves or mainstream practitioners in general as being Tibetans. The non-canonical Buddhists in Tsongkha would then have taken over the designation *Bon* 'Tibet' to distinguish themselves from everybody else – and particularly from the rest of the Tibetans?

Then – after how much time? – somebody – the Tsongkha Bonpo? – must have smuggled the texts containing the word *bonpo* (Pt 1038: *On the Origin and Genealogy of the Btsanpo*, 1039: funeral rites, 1042: royal funeral, 1068: animal sacrifice, 1285: *Story of Bon and Gshen competing in their ability to cure diseases*, ITJ 0738, ITJ 740: divination with dice) into the already sealed Dunhuang cave. By doing so, these Tsongkha Bonpo in Dunhuang would have also felt the necessity to refer to place names in Western Tibet such as *yulchabkyi yabgo*, *Rtsang*, and *Guge* (as in Pt 1136)?

The noun *bon*, as an individual term or part of a compound, appears in many Old Tibetan texts. Apart from the already mentioned texts – Pt 1068, 1285, and ITJ 738 – it appears in texts concerning

divination (Pt 1043, 1047, 1051, ITJ 739), funeral rites (Pt 1040, 1134), and animal sacrifices at funerals (1136, 1194, 1289). Twenty-three instances of the word are found alone in ITJ 734 *The Age of Decline*. None of these texts can be described as being at least distantly sectarian Buddhist.

These texts are devoid of the typical, exaggerated elements of the later Gshenrab narratives. Two elderly men, addressed as *pha* ཕ་ 'father': a *gshenrab(s)* གཤེན་རབ་(ས) 'chief ritualist', called *Myibo* མྱི་བོ་, and a *durgshen* དུར་གཤེན་ 'funeral ritualist', called *Rmada* མ་དྭ་, appear together with other persons in several funeral texts (Pt 1068, 1134, 1136, 1194, ITJ 731; in Pt 1289, a *gshenrabskyi myibo* གཤེན་རབ་སྐྱི་མྱི་བོ་ appears alone). It is evident that these individuals are nothing more than ritual functionaries (cf. Stein 2010: 255-258). The Old Tibetan funeral texts are technical manuals that do not need to prove the ancientness of the rituals described, and the various *Bonpo* and *Gshen* གཤེན་ are mentioned without excitement as if they were well-known and well-established ritual specialists, which they apparently were.

These professionals were so well-known that their appellations could translate the terms used in Chinese polemics against *xieshi* 'false teachers' or soothsayers and *shimu* 'female mediums', terms that refer to ritualists who performed divinations and animal sacrifices. In the Tibetan translations of these polemics, some of which date to the ninth century (e.g., those by Facheng alias Hgos Chosgrub འཕོས་ཚུལ་གྱུ་), *shimu* is always translated as *bonmo* བོན་མོ་, while *xieshi* is rendered occasionally as *mobon* མོ་བོན་ 'divination-Bon[po]'. This translation is also found in a few Dunhuang documents, among them a Tibetan-Chinese glossary and several translations, such as Pt 742, 748, and 2206 (Stein 2010:246-249). In another translation, Pt 239 fol. 7f., *bon* refers again to 'black' funeral rites, involving a psychopomp sheep. Why should the translations associate these rituals with "specifically *Tibetan* beliefs and practices" (Beckwith p. 182, n. 201, emphasis as in the original), if the original texts referred to Chinese, or at best, international folk traditions?

In the first part of his contribution, Beckwith presents a 'reconstruction' of the name *Zhangzhung*. He starts with the Chinese equivalent *Yangtong* (*Yang-t'ung*), which could be reconstructed

either as *\*lianglœung* or as *\*riangrœung*. Since Tibetan *zh* may correspond to an original Tibeto-Burman *\*ly* or *\*ry*, the Tibetan name *Zhangzhung* could similarly represent either a *\*lyanglyung* or a *\*ryangryung*. The tenth century Persian geographical work *Hudūd al-Ālam* (Minorsky 1937) mentions a place *Rānk-rnk* رانک رنک, which could be interpreted as *Rāngrong* (so by Minorsky 1937:61, 92, 194, and 256). Other readings could be *\*Rāngring* or *\*Rāngrang*.<sup>9</sup>

In an earlier publication, Beckwith (1989:168) maintained that this spelling is erroneous for *Zhāngzhng*, as the discriminating dots of ɹ for *z* and ʒ for *zh* might have been omitted – which in fact does happen, e.g., Beckwith (ibid, 169) mentions the case of a spelling ارا *Arā* for ازا *Azhā*, i.e., the Ḥazha ཨཛ. The spelling *Rānk-rnk* could, at least theoretically, also represent the name *\*Zangzang* (cf. the place Zangszangs ཟས་ཟས་ in Rtsang), and since it could equally be possible that only one of the two letters had dots, it could also represent a hypothetical *\*Bzangrong* \*བཟང་རོང་ or *\*Rangzhung* \*རང་ལུང་, etc.<sup>10</sup>

In the contribution under consideration, Beckwith suggests that the reconstructed Chinese and pre-Tibetan forms corroborate an original spelling *Rāngrng*. The Persians would have been unable to hear a difference between a palatalised *ry* and a non-palatalised *r*, and hence would have used the letter *r*. The Tibetans, by contrast, would have heard the difference, but would have had no option other than to write the palatalised *ry* as *zh*.

Several questions must be asked. First, why would the reconstructed Chinese name form reflect a palatalised *ry* only in the first syllable, whereas the reconstructed Tibetan form would require a

<sup>9</sup> The long *ā*, seems to mark an accentuated syllable, which leaves the possibility that any vowel could be inserted in the second, unstressed syllable.

<sup>10</sup> However, as an anonymous reviewer (A.J.A., most probably the well-known British Orientalist, Arberry) remarked, it seems that the same place is rendered as *Ang-rang* انك رنك in another thirteenth century Persian work on *The Temperaments of Animals* (A[rberry] 1937). – I am grateful to Rainer Kimmig, Universität Tübingen, and Jan C. Turner, Deputy Librarian at the Royal Geographic Society for independently identifying the author of the review.

palatalised *ry* also in the second syllable? Secondly, why is a pre-Tibetan name form required at all, if the inhabitants of the country did not speak Tibetan before they were conquered by the Tibetans in the mid seventh century, and if the Tibetans merely took over an already existing name? Do the sound changes observed for Tibetan also apply for a language, the linguistic affiliation of which is all but established? Or for a place name that could have been, ultimately, from an Iranian or even Burushaski source? What evidence is there that the Chinese name form was transmitted via the same channels as the Tibetan one?

Furthermore, why should Tibetan writers not have been able to represent a palatalised *ry*, if they consistently used spellings such as རྩ་ *rhya* over almost 200 years, e.g., ར་སང་རྩེ་འབྲོག་རིང་ལྷན་རྩ་ *Rasangrjeḥi blon Ridstagrhya* in the first entries for the mid to late seventh century *Old Tibetan Annals* (Pt 1288 l. 24) and several other names, including ལིག་མྱི་རྩ་ *Lig Myirhya* (the Zhangzhung King), in the mid ninth century *Old Tibetan Chronicle*? What was the value of the cluster *rhya*, if not a voiceless palatalised *ry*? And if the Tibetans perceived and represented a voiceless palatalised *rhya*, why should they have been unable to perceive and represent the voiced counterpart with *ry*? What exactly is the value of such spellings as *ryel* རྩེ་ ~ *ryal* རྩེ་ (Pt 1043), *ryags* རྩགས་, *ryog* རྩག་, *rye* རྩེ་, *ryu* རྩུ་, *ryung* རྩུང་ (Pt 1047), *ryu* རྩུ་, *ryam* རྩམ་, and again *rye* རྩེ་ and *ryung* རྩུང་ in personal and place names in the *Old Tibetan Annals*, such as, e.g., Rasangrje Spung Ryeryung ར་སང་རྩེ་ལྷུང་རྩེ་ལྷུང་ (ITJ 0750, l. 72)? Why would the same authors have used the spelling *Zhangzhung*, if the country's name were pronounced \**Ryangryung*?

Finally, how could a tenth century Persian from Khorasan, who never left his country,<sup>11</sup> come to know of a pre-Tibetan pronunciation, if this was not reflected by the ninth to tenth century Tibetan pronunciation and spelling? Unfortunately, the Persians of that epoch were not well informed about Tibet – the *Hudūd al-'Ālam* adds little to our knowledge. It contains many misconceptions in the

<sup>11</sup> Bosworth, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hodud-al-alam>, accessed 14 May 2013.

spirit of the time, and the text can only be interpreted with knowledge acquired from other sources and, even then, interpretations are often quite speculative. The position of *Rānk-rnk*, e.g., is ambiguous: while it is associated with Western Tibet in the chapter on the provinces, it is associated with southeastern Tibet (present-day Yunnan) in the chapter dealing with the mountain ranges.

McKay (185-206: *In Search of Zhang Zhung – the 'Grey and Empty' Land?*) attempts to situate Zhangzhung "within the political and economic history of the western Himalayas" and to delimit its frontiers (p. 186). Assuming that the Old Tibetan documents reveal a polity with a somewhat centralised administration, one expects that this polity left "traces in the records of its southern and western neighbours" (187). However, since these records remain silent about Western Tibet, McKay concludes that "the western extent of Zhang zhung formed a cultural frontier and that the difficult terrain limited contacts across that frontier" (190). It is lamentable McKay did not consider the sixth to seventh century Chinese sources on Yangtong, Suvarṇagotra, and the so-called Women's Kingdom, made accessible by, among others, Pelliot (1963).

The idea of a cultural frontier is immediately contradicted by the assumption that Zhangzhung could not rely on its own resources, and that the main source of income was long distance trade, mainly the export of gold, borax, salt, and musk. Zhangzhung was strategically located, controlling the routes along the Indus towards Kashmir, along the Satlej and the Karnali towards India (193f.).

McKay takes up an earlier suggestion by Tucci that European models of centralised state formation should be replaced by a model of a dynamic confederation of clans with shared cultural features and shifting power relationships. This model almost inevitably leads to speculations about a tribal network with:

numerous principalities coalesced around their own religio-political centers while still maintaining ritual relationships across a wide geographical expanse reflecting their origins and culture (199).



This would then support an expansion far to the northeast or, alternatively, an origin in the Qinghai (Amdo) area with a subsequent westward migration (200). These are older ideas (as acknowledged by McKay), and they contradict the Bonpo's claims of an origin from Stagdzigs བླ་མ་གྲིག་མོ་ 'Persia' or the Iranian borderlands, and the observable cultural influences from the west.

McKay further suggests that the ritual influence sphere of protector mountain deities maps the influence sphere of a tribal leader. The merely ritual demarcations could easily be transferred in a basically east-to-west movement (201-203). However, Kailash with its four-river *maṇḍala* is assuredly the result of a west-to-east movement of an original Pamirian model: with four major rivers flowing out roughly in the four cardinal directions: the Tarim to the east, the Gilgit-Indus to the south, the Oxus to the west, and the Jaxartes to the north. These rivers can still be found in Tibetan templates centering on Kailash, although usually helplessly mixed up. If any such conceptual transfer is to be associated with migrations, we should reckon with major migrations from the Pamirian borderlands into Western Tibet and perhaps beyond.

In his second contribution (pp. 207-245: *The Bon of Bon – Forever Old*), Blezer considers the historiographic strategies of the Rdzogschen རྩོག་མཆོད་ transmissions, starting with the observation that every historian is obliged to 'sell' the historical facts in a narrative form, in which fiction and fabulation naturally intrude. The Bonpo face the additional problem of lacking any written source that verifies their claim that Bon is an indigenous religion of Tibet that even antedates Indian Buddhism.

Blezer lists the most common strategies to bridge the gap, such as projecting the origins of important lineages into a distant past, appropriation (and subsequent dissimulation) of Buddhist narratives, transposition of later events into an earlier period, reduplication of events, extension of life periods, transference of attributes from important historical persons, epic concentration of several figures into one and, finally, intentional manipulation of sources (214-218).

As an example of appropriation of Buddhist figures, Blezer mentions several 'curious' names of the Zhangzhung *Snyanrgyud* ལྷན་རྒྱུད་ (Aural Transmission) lineages (220): Darma Ḥbodde དར་མཁའ་བོད་དེ་ (var. Bodde བོད་དེ་), corresponding to Skr. *Dharmabodhi*, perhaps actually Bodhidharma, the first patriarch of Chinese Chan, Dgaḥrab དགའ་རབ་, possibly the Rdzogschen master Dgaḥrab Rdorje དགའ་རབ་རྡོ་རྗེ་, or Gurib གུ་རིབ་/ Gurub Shinglagcan གུ་རུབ་ཤིང་ལག་ཅན་, suggestive of Grum Shinglagcan གུམ་ཤིང་ལག་ཅན་ (*aka* Grum Yeshe Rgyalmtshan གུམ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་).

Blezer concludes that the Aural Transmission lineages "show remarkably few signs of editing and cosmetic surgery" (224), their "biographical silence and reticence in the earlier parts" might be the "most eloquent advocate" for their "veracity" (223). Pure inventions would have more likely been prone to narrative inventions. Within an authentic transmission, the making up or the omission of biographical data does not seem allowable, only minor reconstructions in order to avoid gaps or contradictions (223f.). Pages 225-242 give an outline of the early Zhangzhung *Snyanrgyud* lineage.

Kalsang Norbu Gurung (pp. 247-272: *History and Antiquity of the Mdo 'dus in Relation to the Mdo chen po bzhi*) tries to establish the original content of the *Mdo chenpo bzhi* མདོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཟི་, the 'Four Great *Sūtra*.s' and the relation of the *Mdohdus* མདོ་འདུས་ to the *Gzermig* གཟེར་མིག་ as the possible candidates for the unidentifiable first *sūtra*, the *Hbyungkhungsmdo* རྟུང་ཁུངས་མདོ་. The sources generally agree that the *Mdo chenpo bzhi* མདོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཟི་ were discovered in Bsamyas བསམ་ཡས་ by two Indian monks, and were translated into Tibetan, the details, however, vary, as the list on p. 253 shows. Bonpo scholars have also been of different opinion concerning the identity of the *Hbyungkhungsmdo*.

Thorough investigation of the various sources, however, yields more confusion than clarity (268). Particularly the position of the *Gzermig* as either part of the *Hbyungkhungsmdo* or as a compilation from all four *sūtras* remains unsolved. The author follows, tentatively as he assures, the position that it is not the *Gzermig*, but the *Mdohdus*, which is to be identified with the *Hbyungkhungsmdo* (269f.). However, as it becomes apparent from his discussion, this

position has formed and developed only over centuries. The contribution ends with a list of texts contained in the *Mdo chenpo bzhi*, according to the various sources.

In his second contribution (273-305: *Bon monastic discipline and the great master Dgongs pa rab gsal*), Kalsang Norbu Gurung investigates the origins of the Bonpo *vinaya*. The narrative of the decline of an earlier tradition and the reintroduction of the actual tradition shows clear parallels to the Buddhist tradition. In fact, as the contribution of Nyima Woser Choekhortshang (307-319: *The Origin and Transmission of the Buddhist Lower Vinaya Tradition*) shows, the same foundation figure, the Great Master Dgongspa དགོངས་པ་ or Dgeba Rab(g)sal དགེ་བ་རབ་(ག)སལ་ is claimed by both persuasions. The Buddhist sources even explicitly state that their *vinaya* tradition was of Bonpo origin (Nyima Woser Choekhortshang, 314-316).

There is considerable variation in the individual texts, which necessitates strenuous discussions of identity and who wrote what and when. However, only Kalsang Norbu Gurung provides tables (300-305) that alleviate the limits of memory. His Table 5 shows that not only is the founding figure the same in both traditions, but also a few other figures, such as Muzi Gsalbzangs མུ་བློ་གསལ་བཟངས་ alias Muzu Gsalhbar མུ་བུ་གསལ་འབར་, Shesrab Tshulkhirms Yazi Bonston ཤེས་རབ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཡུ་བཟོན་ལྷོན་ alias Klumes Shesrab Tshulkhirms ལྷུ་མེས་ཤེས་རབ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་, and the already mentioned Grum Shinglagcan.

Nyima Woser Choekhortshan adds that the very name *Dgongspa Rabsal* may have been translated from the Zhangzhung language: *dgongspa* དགོངས་པ་ would translate *muthur* མུ་བུར་, an element that appears in the master's full title Blachen Muthur Dgongspa Rabsal བླ་ཆེན་མུ་བུར་དགོངས་པ་རབ་སལ་, whereas *rabsal* རབ་སལ་ would translate the element *kara* ཀར་ of the master's lay name Mañdzu Kara(h)phan མཎྜུ་ཀར་(ཨ)ཕན་ (312f).

The reader thus realises how intertwined Buddhism and Bon were in the early *phyidar*, and the Buddhists' acknowledgement that their *vinaya* tradition was derived from that of the Bonpo may have contributed to the Bonpo's general perception that they represent the older religious tradition in Tibet.

However, as Kalsang Norbu Gurung notes, it is also a fact that the "Bonpos used the name Dgongs pa gsal or Dongs pa rab gsal later than Tibetan Buddhists" (298). Apparently both religious groups "were writing about the same monastic lineage and it is evident that the stories influenced each other" (ibid).

Altogether, this publication leaves the reviewer with mixed feelings. Serious research into the origins of Bon, the prehistory of Western Tibet, or Tibet in general, should be welcomed. Any such attempts must be based on systematic deconstruction of transmitted myths. However, those authors who attempt such deconstruction appear to be caught between a general mistrust in the tradition and their own favourite scenario that, unlike the tradition, is taken for granted. McKay, Blezer, and Beckwith did not bring us any closer to an understanding of the early history of (Western) Tibet. On the contrary, Beckwith's contribution and Blezer's claims about the Silver Castle are misleading, and there is danger that these memes may go viral, as so often is the case with fanciful ideas.

The last two contributions corroborate earlier observations of the close cooperation (and perhaps double identity) of *phyidar* Bonpo and Buddhist masters, and particularly the archaeological data of the three initial contributions should be of greatest interest, especially to students of Tibetan history.

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## NON-ENGLISH TERMS

## A

*Arā / Azhā* ارا / اڙا

## B

*bdagi / bdaggi* བདག་གི་ / བདག་གི་

Blachen Muthur Dgongspa Rabsal ལྷ་ཆེན་མུ་རྩུར་དགོངས་པ་རབ་སལ་

Blama Btsanpo ལྷ་མ་བཙུན་པོ་

Bodhidharma བོད་ཏི་ཏམ་

*bon, Bon* བོན་

*bonmo* བོན་མོ་

Bonpo བོན་པོ་

Brahmaputra བླ་མཁུ་ཕུ་

Bsamyas བསམ་ཡས་

*Bstanḥbyung* བསྟན་འབྱུང་

\*buan, \*bwan

## C

Cangthang རྩང་ཅང་

Chan 禪

*chateau poudreux*

## D

Darma Ḥbodde / Bode དར་མ་འཛོད་དེ་ / བོད་དེ་

dBus དབུས་

Debgter sngonpo དེབ་གཏེར་སྟོན་པོ་

Dgaḥrab དགའ་རབ་

Dgaḥrab Rdorje དགའ་རབ་རྡོ་རྗེ་

Dgeba / Dgongspa Rab(g)sal དགེ་བ་ / དགོངས་པ་རབ་(ག)སལ་

*dgongspa* དགོངས་པ་

*Dharmabodhi* ཏམ་བོད་ཏི་

Dkarru Grubdbang Bstanḥdzin དཀར་རྩུ་གུབ་དབང་བསྟན་འཛིན་

*durgshen* དུར་ག་ཤེན་

## F

Facheng

*fán* 蕃

## G

Garuḍa གརུཌ

Gautama གཱཱཏམ

Greater Rtsang རྩང་ཆེན་  
 Grum Shinglagcan གུམ་ཤིང་ལག་ཅན་  
 Grum Yeshe Rgyalmtshan གུམ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱལ་མཚན་  
 Gshen གཤེན་  
 gshenrab(s) གཤེན་རབ་(སེ)  
 gshenrabskyi myibo གཤེན་རབས་ཀྱི་མྱི་པོ་  
 Guge གུ་གེ་  
 Gurgyam གུར་གཡམ་  
 Gurib / Gurub Shinglagcan གུ་རིབ་ / གུ་རུབ་ཤིང་ལག་ཅན་  
 Gzermig གཟེར་མིག་

H

Hazha ཨ་ཇ་  
 Hbyungkhungsmdo འབྱུང་ཁུངས་མདོ་  
 Hdarba འདར་བ་  
 Hgos Chosgrub འགོས་ཚས་གུབ་  
 Hode Hosbdag ཉོ་དེ་ཉོས་བདག་  
 Hudūd al-'Ālam حُدُودُ الْعَالَمِ

K

Kailash (Kailāsa) ཀེ་ལཱ་སཱ་  
 kara ཀ་ར་  
 Khyunglung རྒྱུང་ལུང་  
 Khyunglung Silver Castle རྒྱུང་ལུང་དངུལ་མཁར་  
 Klumes Shesrab Tshulkhriims ལུམ་ཤེས་རབ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་  
 Kunḥbum goḥbyed ཀུན་འབུམ་གོ་འབྱེད་

L

Lake Dangra G.yumtsho དང་ར་གཡུ་མཚོ་  
 Lake Mapang མཚོ་མ་པང་  
 Lhari Gyangdo ལྷ་རེ་གྲང་དོ་  
 \*lianglung  
 Līg / Leg / Lag Snyashur ལིག་ / ལེག་ / ལག་སྙ་ཤུར་  
 Līg Myirhya ལིག་མྱི་རྩ་  
 Lopon Tenzin Namdak ལྷོ་བ་དཔོན་བསྟན་འཛིན་རྣམ་དག་  
 \*lyanglung

M

maṇḍala མཎḍལ་  
 Mañdzu Kara(h)phan མཎྜུ་ཀ་ར་(འ)པན་  
 Mdo chenpo bzhi མདོ་ཆེན་པོ་བཞི་



*Mdohdus* མདོ་འདུས་  
*Mkhargdongri* མཁར་གདོང་རི་  
*mobon* མོ་བོན་  
*muthur* མུ་མུར་  
*Muzi Gsalbzangs* མུ་ཟི་གསལ་བཟངས་  
*Muzu Gsalhbar* མུ་ཟུ་གསལ་འབར་  
*Myibo* མྱི་བོ་

N

*Nagchu* ནག་ཆུ་  
*ngang* ངང་  
*ngangur* ང་ངར་  
*ngul* རྩལ་  
*ngur* རུར་  
*Nüguo* 女國

P

*Panggong Lake* པང་གོང་མཚོ་  
*pha* པ་  
*phyidar* ཕྱི་དར་  
*phyung* ཕུང་

R

*rabsal* རབ་སལ་  
*Rānk-rnk* رانك رانك  
*Rasangrjeḥi blon Ridstagrhya* ར་སང་རྗེ་འཛོན་རིད་རྟག་ཆུ་  
*Rasangrje Spung Ryeryung* ར་སང་རྗེ་སུང་ཉེ་རུང་  
*Rbalte / Sbalte* རལ་ཏེ་ / སལ་ཏེ་  
*rdul* རུལ་  
*\*Rdulmkhar* \*རུལ་མཁར་  
*Rdzogschen* རྗོགས་ཆེན་  
*Rgyalrong* རྒྱལ་རོང་  
*rhya* རྩ་  
*\*riangraung*  
*rje Rtsangrjeḥi Phyvaḥ* རྗེ་རུང་རྗེ་འཛོན་ཕུ་  
*Rkongpo* རྟོང་པོ་  
*Rkongpo Bonri* རྟོང་པོ་བོན་རི་  
*Rmada* རམ་ད་  
*Rngulmkhar* རྩལ་མཁར་  
*Rnyingma* རྟིང་མ་

Rtsang རུང་  
 Rtsangpo རུང་པོ་  
 Rtsangstod རུང་སྟོད་  
*ryags* རྟགས་  
*\*ryangryung*  
*ryal* རྟལ་  
*ryam* རྟམ་  
*rye* རྟེ་  
*ryel* རྟེལ་  
*ryog* རྟོག་  
*ryu* རྟུ་  
*ryung* རྟུང་

S

Sadmarkar སང་མར་ཀར་  
 Śākya སཱཀཤ  
 Shang-shung-la ཞང་ཤུང་ལ་  
 Shesrab Tshulkhriṃs Yazī Bonston ཤེས་རབ་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཡེ་ཟེ་བོན་སྟོན་  
*shimu*  
 Shuldkar Rtsangbha G.yungdrungkha ཤུལ་དཀར་རུང་བྱ་གཡུང་རྟུང་ཁ་  
*shullam* ཤུལ་ལམ་  
 Snyanrgyud སྟན་རྒྱུད་  
 Staggzigs སྟག་གཟིགས་  
 Stonpa Gshenrab སྟོན་པ་གཤེན་རབ་  
 Suvarṇagotra སུབ་ཀྱི་མེ་མཆོད་  
*sūtra* སུ་

T

Ti se ཁྱི་སེ་  
*Tisehi dkarchag* ཁྱི་སེ་འི་དཀར་ཆག་  
*tsheg* ཆེག་  
 Tsongkha རྟོག་ཁ་

U

Uḍḍiyāna འུ་ཊཱ་ཡཱ་ཤ་

V

*vinaya* འི་འཇུག་

X

*xieshi*

## Y

*Yangtong* 羊同

yar[cha]b Rtsangpo ཡར་ཆེན་པོ་

Yarkluns River ཡར་ལྷུང་ས་རྩ་པོ་

yulchabkyi/gyi yabgo ཡུལ་ཆབ་གྱི་ཡ་བགོ་ / ཡུལ་ཆབ་གྱི་ཡ་བགོ་

*yulkhala Rtsangstod rtsanggyi dngo mkhargyi nangnah / ... rje**Rtsangrjeñi Phyvab* // ཡུལ་ཁ་ལ་རྩ་རྟེན་རྩ་གྱི་དངོས་པར་གྱི་ནང་ནལ་... རྩེ་རྩ་རྩེ་ལྷུ།

## Z

Zangszangs ཟངས་ཟངས་

Zhangzhung ཇང་ཇུང་

Zhangzhung Darpa / Darma ཇང་ཇུང་དར་པ་ / དར་མ་